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COMICS



X-MEN[®]
SPECIAL
EVENT

AN SLAUGHT[™]

EPILOGUE



THE PATH TO REDEMPTION

Stan Lee Presents the final chapter in the

ONSLAUGHT SAGA

PRISONER M-13

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HE IS PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER, FORMERLY THE MOST POWERFUL MUTANT ON THE FACE OF THE PLANET, ONE TIME LEADER OF THE OUTLAW GROUP CALLED THE X-MEN...

...UNTIL HE ALLOWED HIMSELF, IN A MOMENT OF WEAKNESS, TO BEGIN THE SELF-TRANSFORMATION THAT EVENTUALLY LED TO THE CREATION OF THE NEAR-OMNIPOTENT BEING CALLED ONSLAUGHT.

THE CONSEQUENCES --

-- INCLUDING THE SACRIFICE OF EARTH'S MOST RENOWNED HEROES, THE FANTASTIC FOUR AND THE AVENGERS --

-- WERE SO MONSTROUS THAT HE FELT THAT HUMANITY WAS OWED THE ASSURANCE THAT IT COULD NOT HAPPEN AGAIN.

EVEN IF IT MEANT SACRIFICING HIS OWN FREEDOM.

THIS, HOWEVER, IS NOT THE PENANCE HE EXPECTED.

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT, BASTION --

-- PRISONER M-13 IS IN GOVERNMENT CUSTODY BY HIS OWN CONSENT.



IS THAT SO, MR. GYRICH?

YOUR GOVERNMENT HAS GRANTED EXTRAORDINARY POWER TO MY MULTI-NATIONAL TASK FORCE.

THIS ABANDONED HULKBUSTER BASE WAS MODIFIED AT THEIR EXPENSE TO CONFINED DANGEROUS...

...INDIVIDUALS.

I WAS APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF THIS INSTALLATION, AND AS SUCH I HAVE THE POWER TO EXERCISE EXTREME SANCTIONS.

AND I HAVE DEDICATED THIS BASE AND ALL ITS PERSONNEL TO ONE TASK --

-- FINDING A WAY TO PROTECT HOMO SAPIENS FROM HOMO SUPERIOR.

AND HOW EXACTLY DOES PRISONER M-13 CONSTITUTE A "DANGEROUS INDIVIDUAL"?

GRANTED, HE'S THE WORLD'S FOREMOST AUTHORITY ON GENETIC MUTATION --



-- BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE HIM A MUTANT.

HE'S CONFINED TO A WHEELCHAIR, FOR GOD'S SAKE!

ARE THOSE PSI-SHIELDS REALLY NECESSARY?

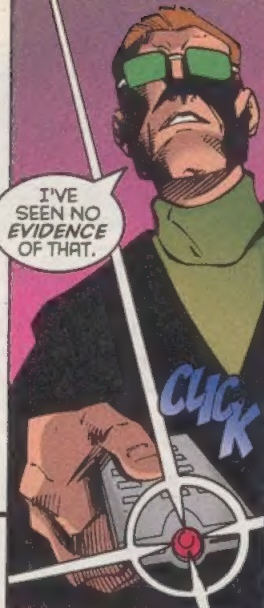


THERE ARE FACTORS BEYOND YOUR KEN, GYRICH.

YOU CANNOT BEGIN TO COMPREHEND...

FOR REASONS OF NATIONAL SECURITY, ALL I CAN TELL YOU...

... IS THAT YOUR SO-CALLED HARMLESS SCHOLAR IS IN POSSESSION OF VITAL INFORMATION CONCERNING THE ENTITY KNOWN AS ONSLAUGHT!



I'VE
SEEN NO
EVIDENCE
OF THAT.



REPLAY:
INTERROGATION
SECTION-13 CONDUCTED
IN SUBJECT'S CELL IN
MAXIMUM SECURITY
BLOCK.

... WE
WERE NOT
PLEASED WITH
YOUR LEVEL OF
COOPERATION,
PRISONER
M-13 --



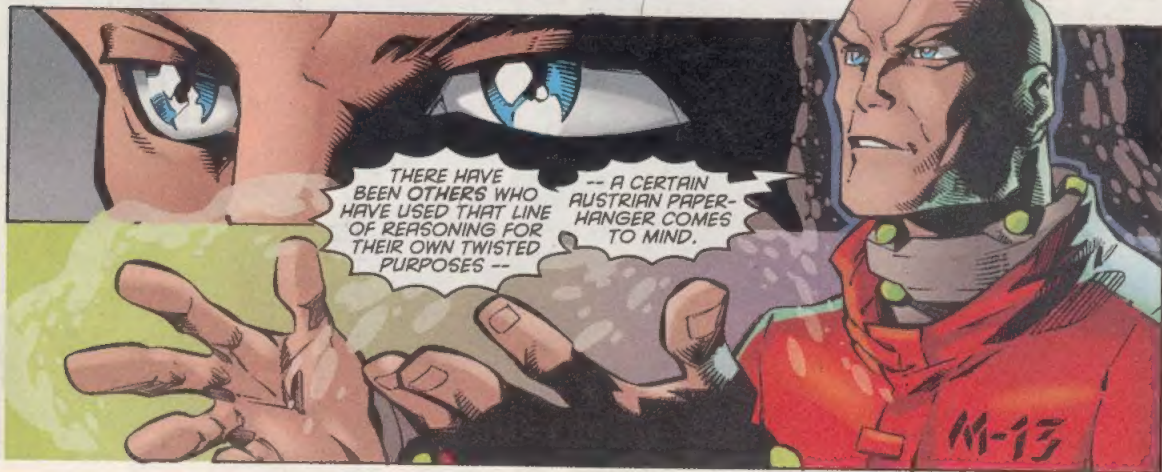
REALLY, BASTION.
THIS IS SUCH AN
OBVIOUS PLOY AT
DEHUMANIZING
A MAN...

...REDUCING
ME TO A
NUMBER.



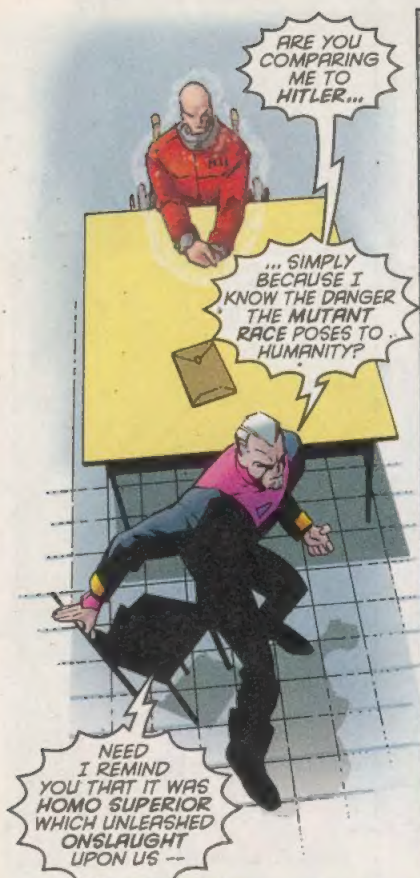
CURIOUS
THAT ONE WHO
IS SO CONCERNED
WITH MUTANTS
WOULD BANDY THAT WORD
AROUND SO
FREELY...

... MUTANTS
AREN'T REALLY
HUMAN, ARE
THEY?



THERE HAVE
BEEN OTHERS WHO
HAVE USED THAT LINE
OF REASONING FOR
THEIR OWN TWISTED
PURPOSES --

-- A CERTAIN
AUSTRIAN PAPER-
HANGER COMES
TO MIND.





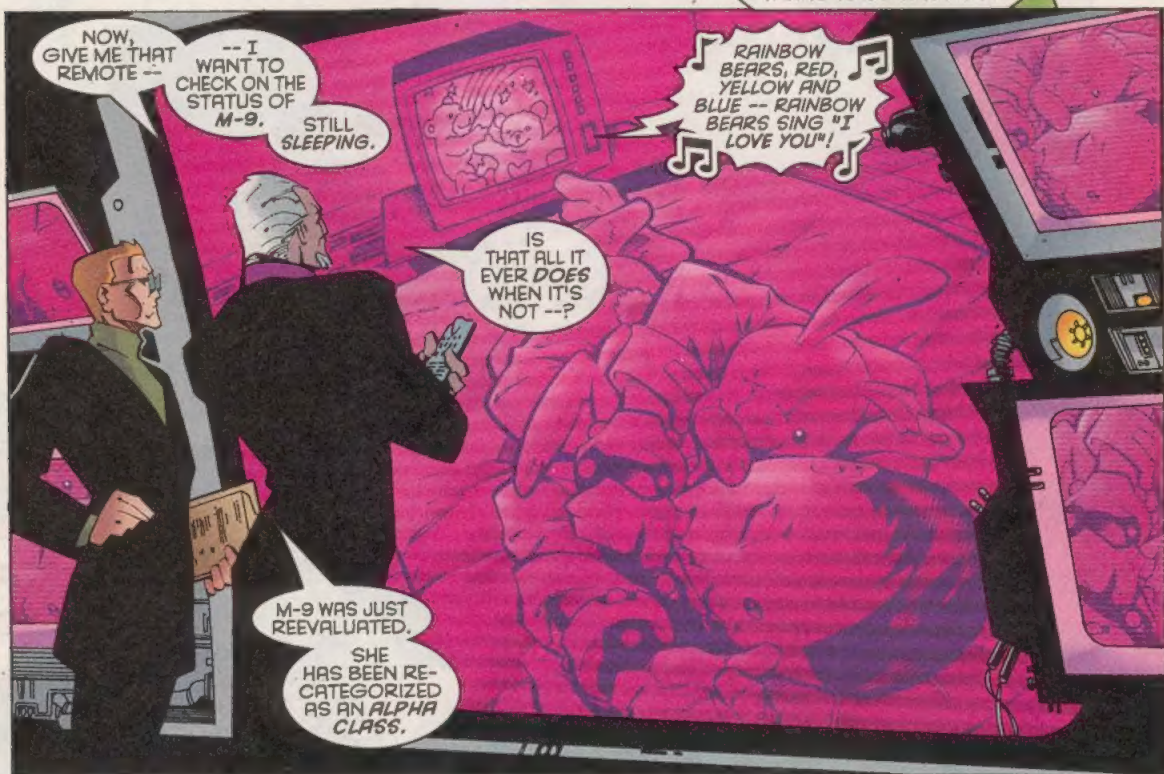


THAT WAS A BIT EXCESSIVE, DON'T YOU THINK?

AND I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS -- ALL THESE PSI-SHIELD PRECAUTIONS AND BLAST DOORS FOR A MAN WHO IS WELL-RESPECTED IN THE WORLD COMMUNITY --

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT XAVIER THAT THE REST OF US DON'T?

WATCH YOUR TONE, BUREAUCRAT. WE SIMPLY GUARD AGAINST A TELEPATH FROM THE OUTSIDE TRYING TO CONTACT HIM.



NOW, GIVE ME THAT REMOTE --

-- I WANT TO CHECK ON THE STATUS OF M-9.

STILL SLEEPING.

RAINBOW BEARS, RED, YELLOW AND BLUE -- RAINBOW BEARS SING "I LOVE YOU"!

IS THAT ALL IT EVER DOES WHEN IT'S NOT --?

M-9 WAS JUST REEVALUATED.

SHE HAS BEEN RE-CATEGORIZED AS AN ALPHA CLASS.



THERE WERE INDICATIONS THAT SHE IS CAPABLE OF FOOLING THE SENSORS AND REGISTERING FALSE READINGS --



IT!
IT IS A THING...
... NOT A SHE.

AT LEAST SOME OF M-13'S MUTANT FRIENDS HAVE A TENUOUS CLAIM TO PARTIAL HUMANITY --

-- UNLIKE THAT ABOMINATION THAT WAS CREATED IN THE MANITE PROJECT.



HELICOPTER COMING IN, SIR! YOU'RE NEEDED TOPSIDE!



THAT
WOULD BE *Dr.*
THYSSON.

ANOTHER
RESEARCH
SPECIALIST?

Dr. INGRID
THYSSON IS A
CLINICAL
PSYCHOLOGIST,
GYRICH...

... *TOP6*
IN HER
FIELD.

SHE'LL
BE DOING A
COMPLETE *PSYCH*
EVALUATION
ON *M-13*.

IF ONE IS
TO BE EFFECTIVE
IN EXTRACTING
INFORMATION FROM
A PARTICULARLY
RETICENT
SUBJECT...

... IT PAYS
TO KNOW ALL THE
DARK CORNERS OF
THAT SUBJECT'S
PSYCHE.



WELCOME
TO NEVADA, *Dr.*
THYSSON!

I'M
SPECIAL
AGENT *HENRY*
PETER GYRICH
AND THIS
IS --

BASTION.
HE'S THE ONE
IN CHARGE,
CORRECT?

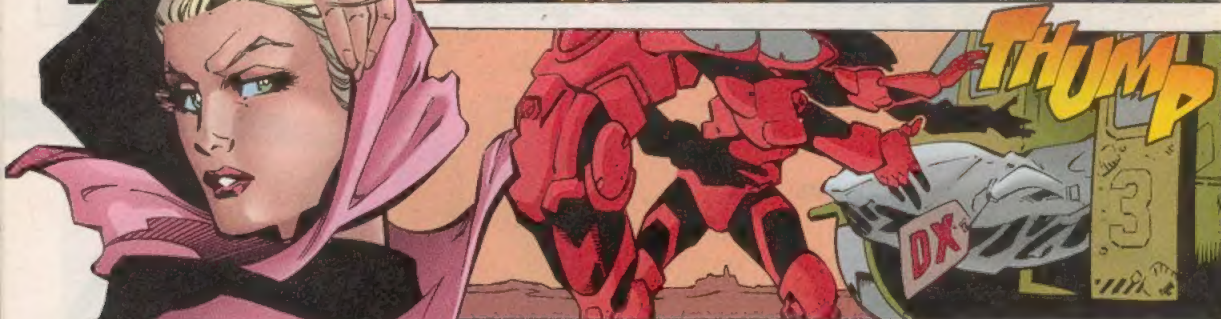
INDUBITABLY.



IS THE
SUBJECT
READY FOR
INTERVIEW?

M-13 IS...
INDISPOSED AT
PRESENT --

-- IT
WOULD ALSO
BE PREFERABLE TO
RUN AN EXTENSIVE
BRIEF BEFORE
YOU ACTUALLY
MEET HIM.



THUMP



GOOD
LORD/ WAS -- WAS
THAT A BODY BEING SO
UNCEREMONIOUSLY
DISPOSED OF?

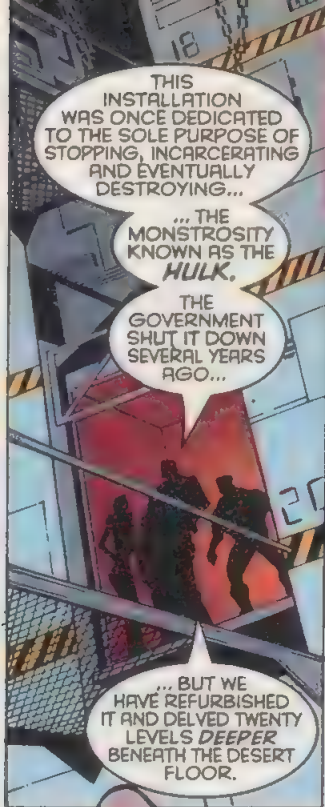
WHAT
IS THIS
PLACE?



A
PLACE THAT
DOES NOT EXIST
AS FAR AS THE REST
OF THE WORLD IS
CONCERNED.

REMEMBER
THAT.

NOW,
STEP THIS WAY,
PLEASE.



THIS INSTALLATION WAS ONCE DEDICATED TO THE SOLE PURPOSE OF STOPPING, INCARCERATING AND EVENTUALLY DESTROYING...

... THE MONSTROSITY KNOWN AS THE **HULK**.

THE GOVERNMENT SHUT IT DOWN SEVERAL YEARS AGO...

... BUT WE HAVE REFURBISHED IT AND DELVED TWENTY LEVELS *DEEPER* BENEATH THE DESERT FLOOR.



THIS IS OUR MAXIMUM SECURITY LEVEL... AND THAT IS YOUR SUBJECT, PRISONER M-13.

HE BECAME VIOLENT A SHORT TIME AGO AND HAD TO BE... *RESTRAINED*.



WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

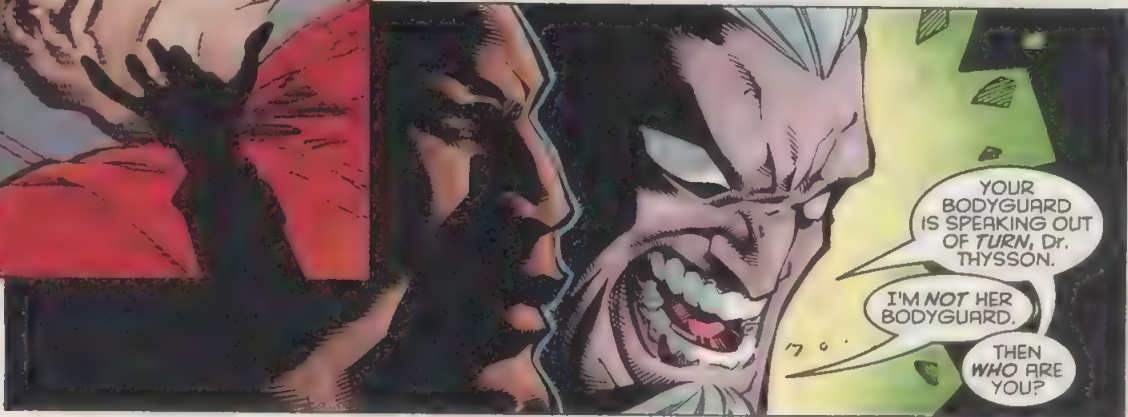


I WAS TOLD THAT PROFESSOR XAVIER WAS *COOPERATING* WITH VAL COOPER IN THE INVESTIGATION OF *ONSLAUGHT*.



WELL, MA'AM, THERE ARE INVESTIGATIONS, AND THERE ARE INVESTIGATIONS...

IT APPEARS THAT *THIS ONE* WAS THE OLD-FASHIONED KIND THAT HADN'T EVEN PROGRESSED TO RUBBER HOSES YET.



YOUR BODYGUARD IS SPEAKING OUT OF *TURN*, Dr. THYSSON.

I'M NOT HER BODYGUARD.

THEN WHO ARE YOU?

SPECIAL
OPERATIVE
DARYLL
SMITH.

I WAS THE AGENCY'S TOP MUTANT
HUNTER, BUT I'VE BEEN OUT OF THE
LOOP FOR A WHILE®, BUT NOW
I'M REPORTING BACK
FOR --

IF YOU VALUE YOUR LIFE
AND FREEDOM, MY
FRIEND--

-- YOU
WILL RESTRAIN
YOURSELF FROM
QUESTIONING MY
AUTHORITY IN
THE FUTURE.
DO I
MAKE MYSELF
CLEAR?

YES SIR,
I GET THE
DRIFT.

BACK TO
BUSINESS.

PROFESSOR
XAVIER
VOLUNTEERED HIS
EXPERTISE TO VALERIE
COOPER, THE CHAIR-
WOMAN OF THE
COMMITTEE ON
MUTANT AFFAIRS.

IN TURN,
UNDER ORDERS
FROM THE VERY
TOP...

... XAVIER WAS
REMANDED INTO
MY CUSTODY.

THE
UNITED STATES-- THE
WORLD-- MUST KNOW
HOW ONSLAUGHT
HAPPENED.

WAS IT AN
ANOMALY, OR A
GENETIC PORTENT
OF THINGS TO
COME?

THIS
MAN WILL HELP
US DISCOVER THE
TRUTH--

WHAT'S
THAT ON THE
MONITORS?!

TH-THEY'RE
CALLED THE
"RAINBOW
BEARS".

SOME
KIND OF GLITCH
IN YOUR SYSTEM,
MAYBE... ?

"IT'S M-13/ HE'S
BYPASSING THE
PSI-SUPPRESSORS
SOMEHOW!"

"IMPOSSIBLE!"

"IT'S FAR FROM
IMPOSSIBLE,
GYRICH."

"THAT'S PART OF A
KID-VID SATELLITE
FEED WE PIPE INTO
M-9'S CELL --

"-- PROBABLY
NOTHING MORE
THAN A CROSSED
WIRE."

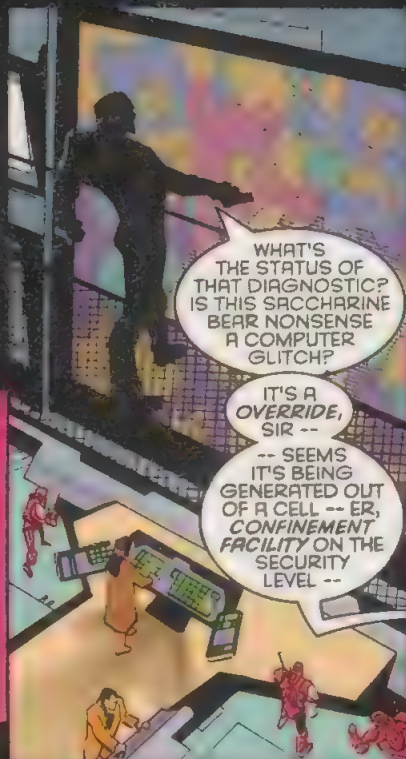
DON'T
BE AFRAID,
MISTER.

YOU'RE
HURTIN' REAL
BAD, AINT
CHA?

"RUN A
DIAGNOSTIC,
I WANT THAT
CONFIRMED."

I CAN
TELL, YA
KNOW...

WHO --
WHO ARE
YOU?



WHAT'S THE STATUS OF THAT DIAGNOSTIC? IS THIS SACCHARINE BEAR NONSENSE A COMPUTER GLITCH?

IT'S A OVERRIDE, SIR --

-- SEEMS IT'S BEING GENERATED OUT OF A CELL -- ER, CONFINEMENT FACILITY ON THE SECURITY LEVEL --



SECURITY! I AM CALLING A FULL ALERT!



I'M M-9.

BUT YOU CAN CALL ME NINA, LIKE TUESDAY DID.

BUT HOW --?

THROUGH THE WALL? I CALL IT SLIDIN'...



THERE'S A REASON WHY WE'RE BEING PREVENTED FROM MONITORING WHAT'S GOING ON IN XAVIER'S CELL --



... DON'T BE TELLIN' THEM I DONE IT, OKAY?

I -- I WON'T.



BASS-CHUN GOT MAD, HUH?

DON'T WORRY, I'LL CLEAN IT ALL UP FOR YA!

YOU'RE A TELEKINETIC, AS WELL?

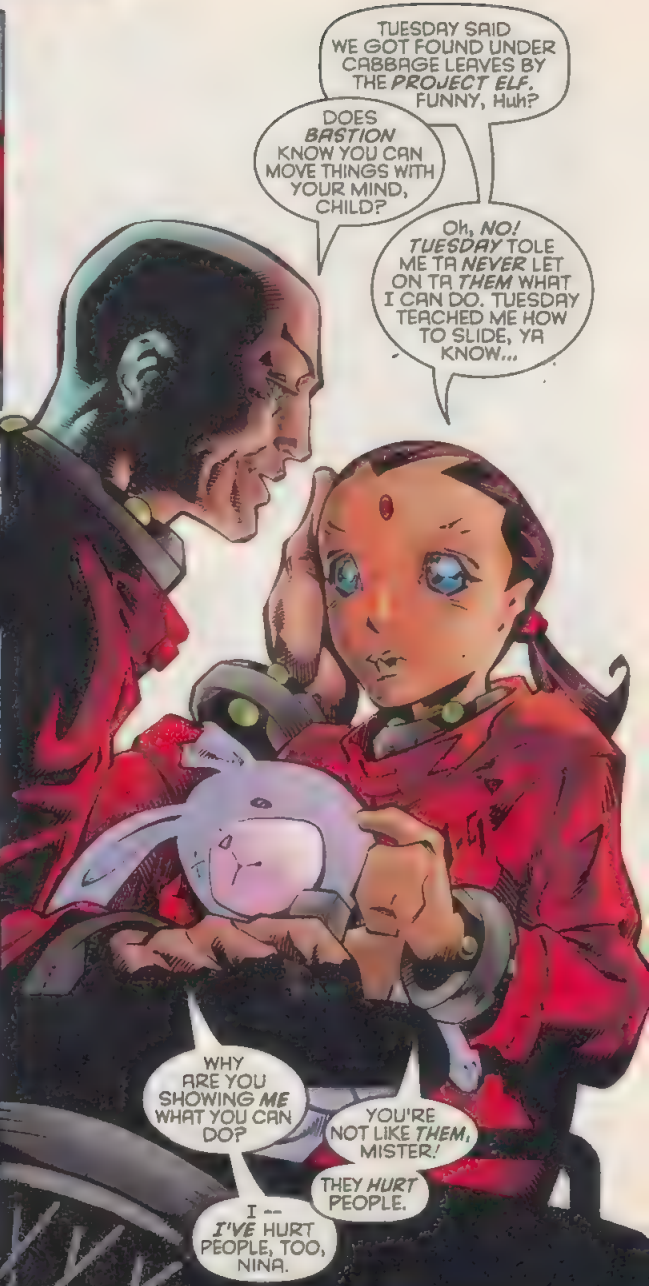


I KIN MOVE STUFF REAL GOOD, HUH?

WHERE DID YOU COME FROM, NINA? HOW DID YOU GET HERE?



ALWAYS BEEN HERE.



TUESDAY SAID WE GOT FOUND UNDER CABBAGE LEAVES BY THE PROJECT ELF. FUNNY, HUH?

DOES BASTION KNOW YOU CAN MOVE THINGS WITH YOUR MIND, CHILD?

OH, NO! TUESDAY TOLE ME TA NEVER LET ON TA THEM WHAT I CAN DO. TUESDAY TEACHED ME HOW TO SLIDE, YA KNOW...

WHY ARE YOU SHOWING ME WHAT YOU CAN DO?

YOU'RE NOT LIKE THEM, MISTER!

THEY HURT PEOPLE.

I -- I'VE HURT PEOPLE, TOO, NINA.

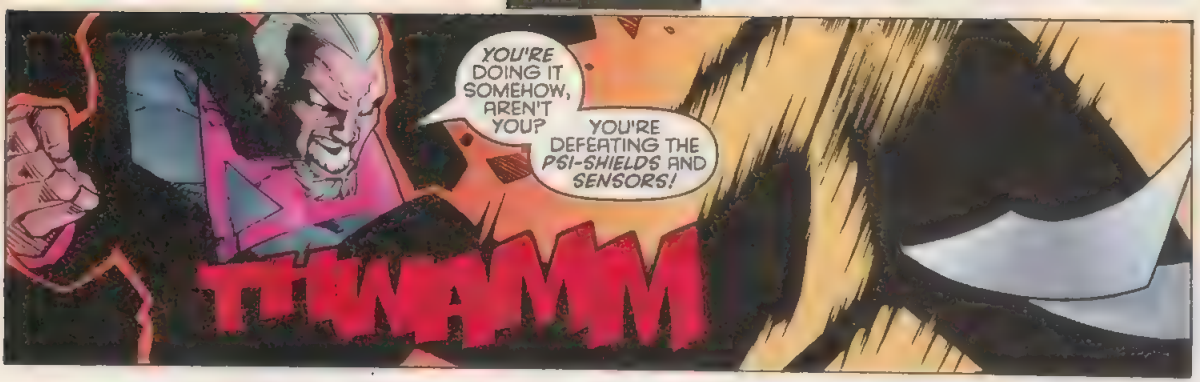


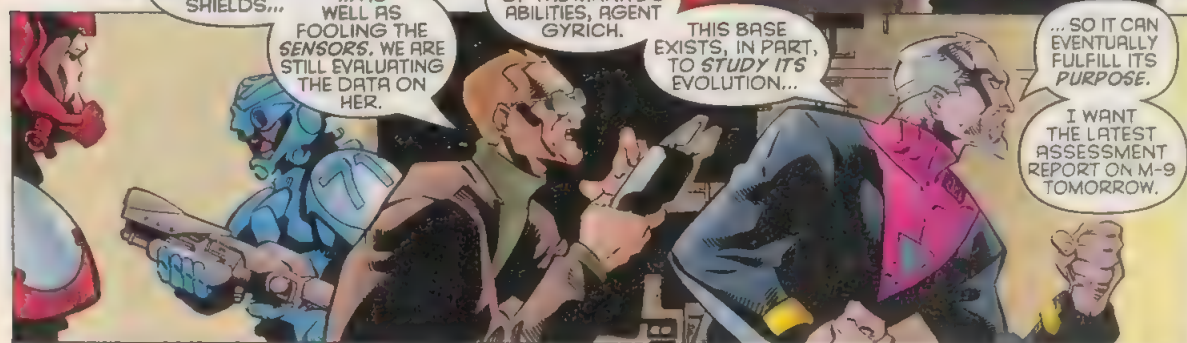
BUT THEY'RE NOT SORRY.

THIS IS MY FRIEND, HARRY.

WILL YA TELL US A STORY, SOMETIME?







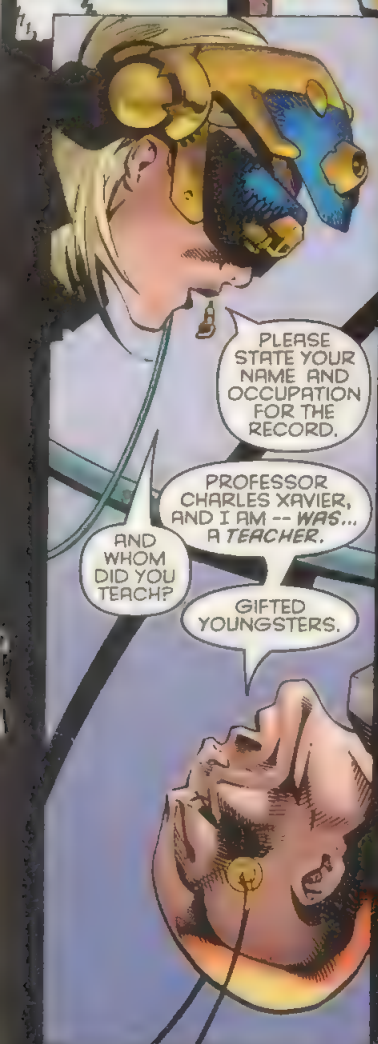


I DON'T KNOW IF I APPROVE OF YOUR TASTE IN *COUCHES*, DR. THYSSON.

IT IS A *GYRO-SCANNER*, PROFESSOR XAVIER.

IT MONITORS RESPIRATION, HEART-BEAT, TEMPERATURE, BLOOD SUGAR, BRAIN WAVES AND SEVENTEEN OTHER FUNCTIONS.

LET'S BEGIN WITH SIMPLE WORD ASSOCIATION, SHALL WE?

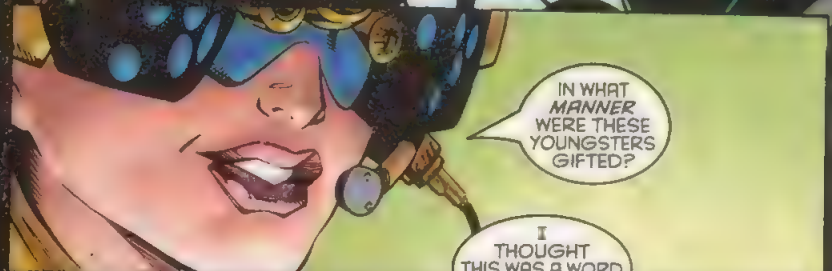


PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME AND OCCUPATION FOR THE RECORD.

PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER, AND I AM -- *WAS*... A TEACHER.

AND WHOM DID YOU TEACH?

GIFTED YOUNGSTERS.



IN WHAT MANNER WERE THESE YOUNGSTERS GIFTED?

I THOUGHT THIS WAS A WORD ASSOCIATION TEST.

MAY WE PLEASE PROCEED WITH THE TEST PROPER?





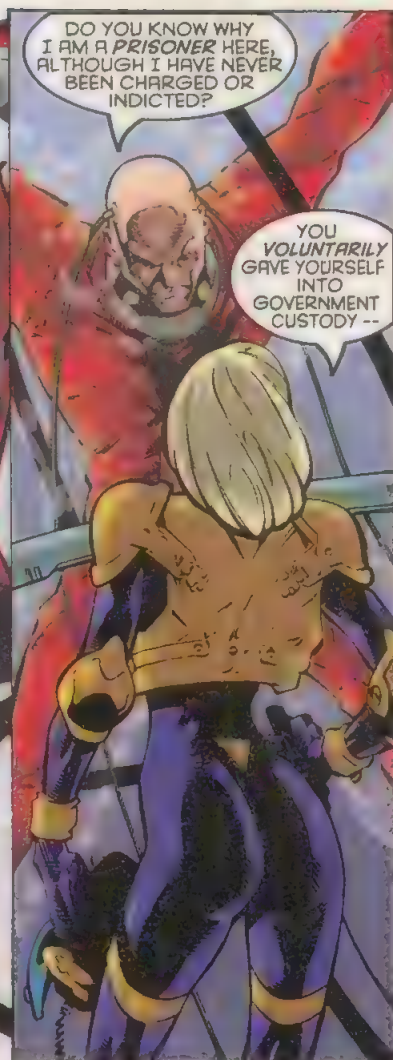
PROFESSOR
I REALIZE IT GOES
AGAINST YOUR
PEDANTIC NATURE
TO BE THE *TESTEE*
RATHER THAN THE
TESTOR...

... BUT
I HAVE MY
JOB TO
DO.

TO
WHAT *END*, Dr.
THYSSON?

DO YOU
KNOW THE *REAL*
PURPOSE FOR THIS
INSTALLATION...

... AND
WHAT BASTION
INTENDS TO DO WITH
YOUR EVALUATION
REPORT ON
ME?



DO YOU KNOW WHY
I AM A *PRISONER* HERE,
ALTHOUGH I HAVE NEVER
BEEN CHARGED OR
INDICTED?

YOU
VOLUNTARILY
GAVE YOURSELF
INTO
GOVERNMENT
CUSTODY --



I VOLUNTEERED
MY COOPERATION
TO SOMEONE
I *TRUST*...

... SOMEONE
WHO PROBABLY
DOESN'T EVEN KNOW
WHERE I AM RIGHT
NOW.

BY NO
MEANS DID
I ASK TO HELP
A MAN WHOSE
PERSONAL
AGENDA...

... IS THE
ERADICATION
OF EVERYTHING
I HOLD DEAR.



WHAT DID YOU
HOPE TO *ACHIEVE* BY
GIVING YOUR-
SELF UP?

I
WANTED
TO HELP. I
WANTED...

... *REDEMPTION*.



REDEMPTION
FOR WHAT? WHAT
DID YOU DO
THAT --

THAT IS
INFORMATION
THAT WOULD PROVE
DANGEROUS
TO YOU.

IS THAT
A VEILED
THREAT?

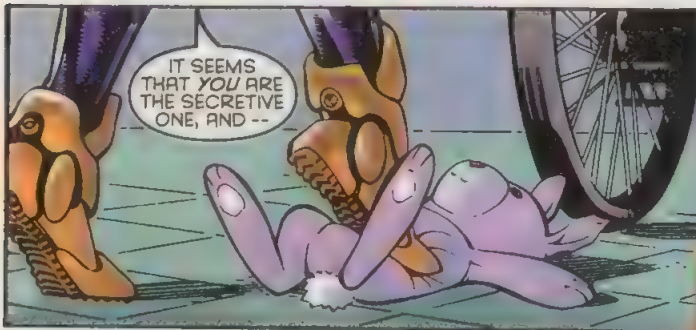


NO, IT
IS A **BLATANT**
WARNING.

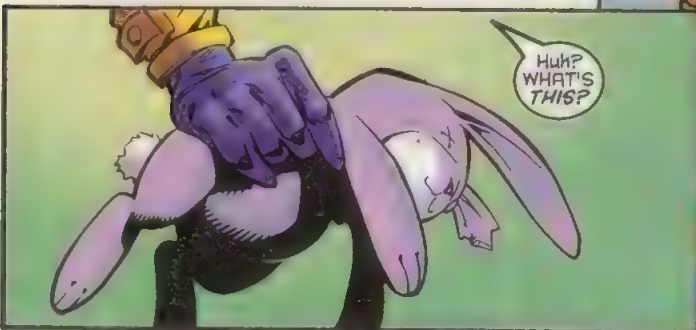
THESE ARE
NOT THE PEOPLE
I EXPECTED TO --
TO DO RESEARCH
WITH.

I FEAR
FOR YOUR
SAFETY IF YOU
WERE TO
LEARN...

... MORE
THAN BASTION
WANTS YOU TO
KNOW.



IT SEEMS
THAT YOU ARE
THE SECRETIVE
ONE, AND --



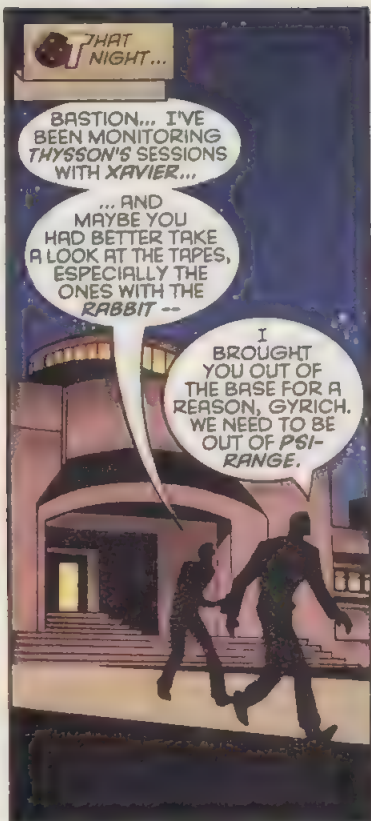
Huh?
WHAT'S
THIS?



GIVE ME
THAT --



-- THAT'S
HARRY.



THAT NIGHT...

BASTION... I'VE BEEN MONITORING THYSSON'S SESSIONS WITH XAVIER...

... AND MAYBE YOU HAD BETTER TAKE A LOOK AT THE TAPES, ESPECIALLY THE ONES WITH THE RABBIT --

I BROUGHT YOU OUT OF THE BASE FOR A REASON, GYRICH. WE NEED TO BE OUT OF PSI-RANGE.



THE ASSESSMENT ON PRISONER M-9 IS CONCLUSIVE. THE LITTLE MANITE IS TOO DANGEROUS TO BE ALLOWED TO REACH PUBERTY --

-- IT WILL HAVE TO BE A DX PROTOCOL.

THE PROBLEM LIES IN EXECUTING THE PROTOCOL WITHOUT THE TARGET BECOMING AWARE.

YOU AND I WILL HAVE TO REMAIN ABOVE GROUND UNTIL THE MATTER IS RESOLVED --

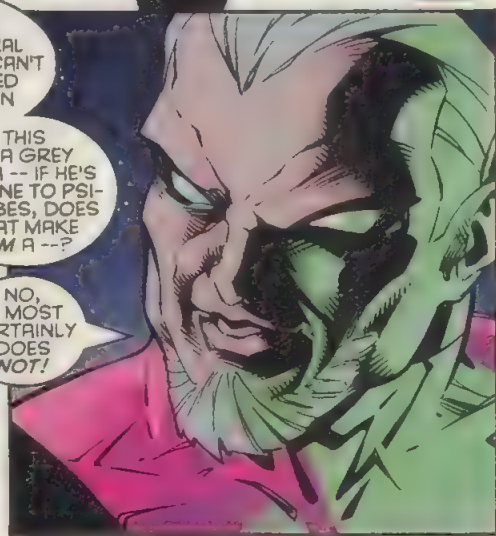
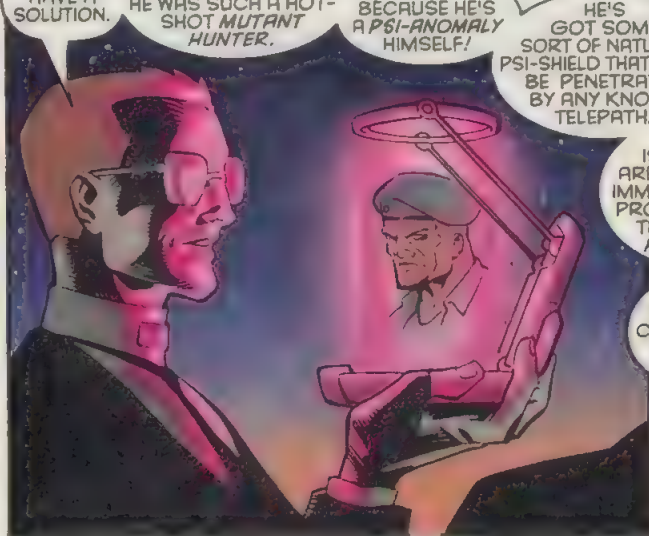
I ALREADY HAVE A SOLUTION. I PULLED SMITH'S DOSSIER AND FOUND OUT WHY HE WAS SUCH A HOT-SHOT MUTANT HUNTER.

IT'S BECAUSE HE'S A PSI-ANOMALY HIMSELF!

HE'S GOT SOME SORT OF NATURAL PSI-SHIELD THAT CAN'T BE PENETRATED BY ANY KNOWN TELEPATH!

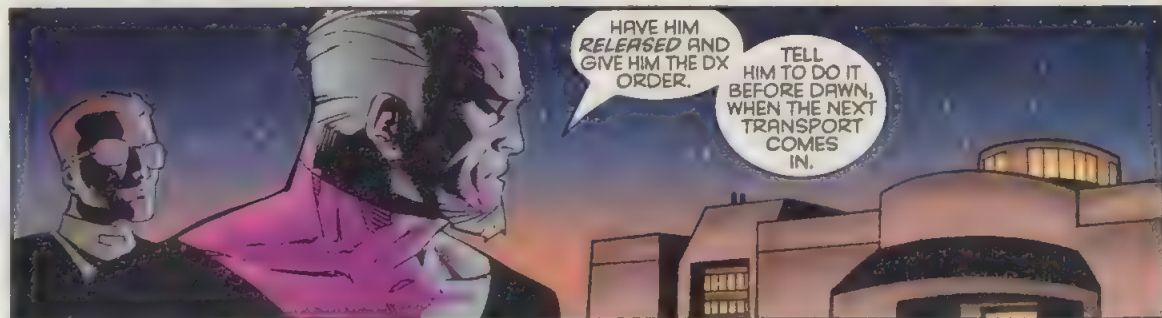
THIS IS A GREY AREA -- IF HE'S IMMUNE TO PSI-PROBES, DOES THAT MAKE HIM A --?

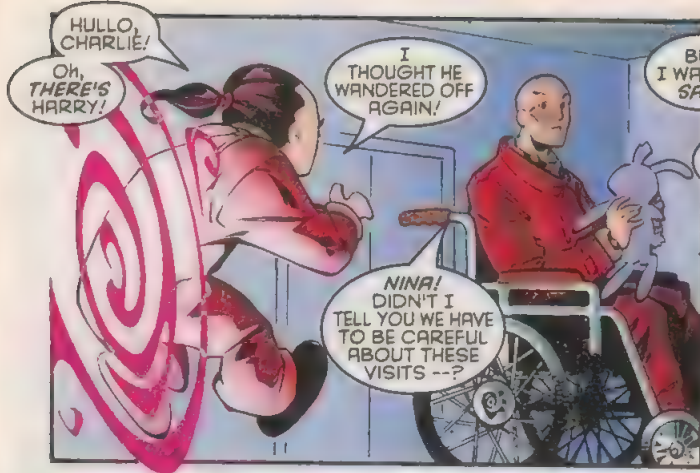
NO, IT MOST CERTAINLY DOES NOT!



HAVE HIM RELEASED AND GIVE HIM THE DX ORDER.

TELL HIM TO DO IT BEFORE DAWN, WHEN THE NEXT TRANSPORT COMES IN.





HULLO, CHARLIE!

Oh, THERE'S HARRY!

I THOUGHT HE WANDERED OFF AGAIN!

NINA! DIDN'T I TELL YOU WE HAVE TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT THESE VISITS ---?

BUT I WAS SO SAD!

THE RED MAN..?

THE RED MAN KEEPS THINKIN' BAD THINGS ABOUT ME.

THE MAN WITH ALL THE RED AND ANGRY THOUGHTS IN HIS HEAD!

'COURSE, I CAN'T SEE HIS THOUGHTS, BUT I CAN SEE GYRICH'S, AND GYRICH IS SO UPSET.

IT MAKES ME SAD.



BASTION.

IF NINA CAN'T "READ" BASTION, IT MEANS...

LISTEN, NINA. BASTION IS A VERY ANGRY PERSON, BUT WE MUSTN'T EVER LET SOMEBODY ELSE'S ANGER MAKE US MAD.

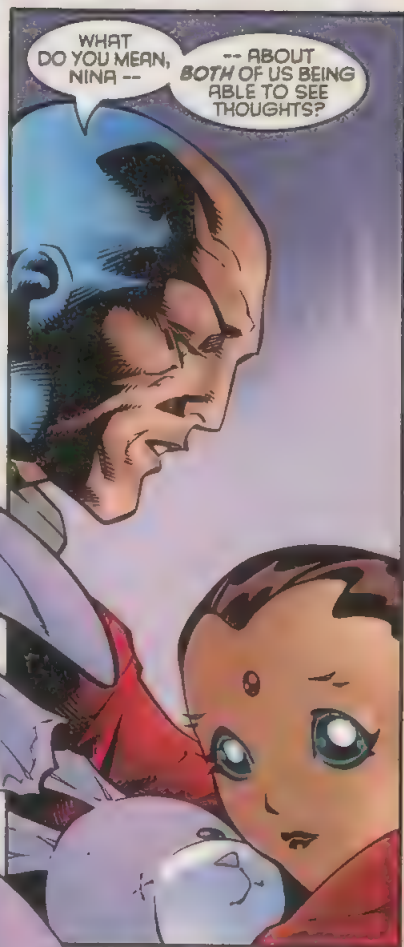
Oh, I KNOW THAT!



YOU KNOW, IF EVERYBODY COULD SEE THOUGHTS LIKE WE CAN, THEY WOULD NEVER WANT TO HURT NOBODY!

IT MAKES ME SO UPSET WHEN I SEE HURT INSIDE A PERSON.

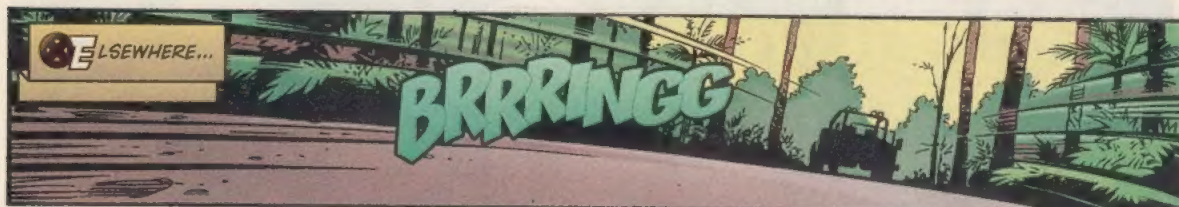
THAT'S WHY I CAME TA SEE YOU LAST NIGHT, CHARLIE.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN, NINA --

-- ABOUT BOTH OF US BEING ABLE TO SEE THOUGHTS?





HELLO,
MAJCOMB
HERE.

CHARLES?
HOW ON
EARTH --?

YES, I'M
LISTENING --



...RAINBOW
BEARS AGAIN
ON ALL THE
MONITORS.

DOES
THIS MEAN
THAT SOMETHING
HAS GONE AWRY IN
XAVIER'S CELL
AGAIN?

CAN'T
GET A HOLD OF
EITHER GYRICH OR
BASTION --



THIS IS
MY CHANCE
TO GET TO THE
BOTTOM OF
THIS!

TIME TO
EARN YOUR
PAYCHECK,
DARYLL.

KACHUNK



